



United States Marine Corps  
Lejeune Leadership Institute



## **MajGen John A. Lejeune: Officers of the Second Division**

HEADQUARTERS SECOND DIVISION  
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES,  
Germany. February 15, 1919.

MEMORANDUM:

TO THE OFFCERS OF THE SECOND DIVISION:

1. I HAVE OBSERVED WITH REGRET A TENDENCY ON THE PART OF General Courts-Martial to show too great a leniency towards officers undergoing trial. I attribute this tendency to the fact that our Courts-Martial are composed chiefly of officers who have had but little experience in the administration of Military Justice.

2. It is the natural impulse of men with kindly and unselfish natures to shield and to favor their friends even at the expense of injury to themselves. This ordinarily is a noble impulse, but there are higher things with which it cannot be allowed to interfere. These are honor, and the duty which we owe to our country and to the service to which we belong. We must never allow ourselves to forget that the Officer Corps of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps constitutes the only class of men in our Country who administer justice to themselves and who discipline themselves. A Court of Officers convened to try a brother officer is a court of honor, and should perform its duty fearlessly, honorably, and without favoritism. The honor, the reputation, and the good name of the Second Division is in our hands. We, only, can sully it; we, only, can protect it. Let us set our standards of conduct high, let us see to it that those who bring discredit on the Division are made to suffer the just consequences of their acts.

(Signed) JOHN A. LEJEUNE,  
Major General, U.S.M.C.  
Commanding

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